



KINROSS WOLAROI  
SCHOOL

# INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE



**STUDENT INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM:**  
Information for outgoing students and their parents

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## KINROSS WOLAROI SCHOOL PRIMARY CONTACT

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## WELCOME TO KINROSS WOLAROI SCHOOL

We are delighted to facilitate the exchange program for our students for short and long-term visits to our partner schools. We hope that our KWS students will benefit from the experiences of being part of the school and wider communities in their exchange countries.

This booklet details the expectations and conditions under which KWS conducts exchanges. The information in this booklet is provided for exchange students, staff and the parents.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

KWS encourages students to participate in an exchange enable them to:

- gain first-hand insight into other cultures in order to develop tolerance, understanding and respect for different ways of life and different values
- widen their perspective and social experience
- gain experience overseas
- increase student awareness of their role as global citizens
- learn in a different cultural environment
- widen their understanding of the global community
- Improve knowledge, fluency and cultural understanding of foreign language (language exchanges).

## PARTICIPATION

Students considering an exchange should keep in mind that they will be ambassadors for their country and their school. Student behaviour can and will influence the attitudes of other people towards KWS and Australia.

Schools take their responsibility to select reliable and well-motivated students very seriously. It is understood that students selected will make a significant contribution to the program.

In selecting students to participate in an exchange, the School has considered the student's:

- Age and maturity
- Motivation for participating in the exchange
- Academic performance and the likely impact of the exchange on the student's studies
- Any medical or health issues or other special needs of the student, resilience to change and difference.
- Contribution to our School's co-curricular program (including sport, cultural pursuits and community service)
- Personal circumstances.
- Active study of the target language (language exchanges).

The School will not support student participation in the exchange program if it does not believe that the exchange is in the student's or either school's best interests.



## GENERAL MATTERS

### Preparation

It is important for a successful exchange program for parents to:

- Be involved
- Discuss with their child what to expect during the program and develop strategies for coping with new, different and sometimes difficult and challenging situations
- Assist their child in understanding cultural requirements, travel arrangements and money arrangements.

### Arrival and Departure

Students will arrange their own flights, insurance and travel. Students will be met at the airport by staff or drivers from the partner school. Details of pick-ups will be arranged with the student and the school staff.

### Accommodation

#### Boarding

Some exchange students will be accommodated in boarding houses. The nature of this accommodation can vary from school to school (shared dormitory or twin room). While in boarding, students will be required to be respectful of the boarding rules and the boarding house.

#### Host families

Some students will be accommodated with host families. It is important to note that when students are being hosted by a family, they are subject to the 'house rules' of the host family. The host family will expect the same standard of respect and behaviour and exercise the same care and responsibility with exchange students, as they would with their own children. It will be helpful to have discussions about this at the beginning of the stay.

Host families may be able to offer you a single room but you may also be required to share a room with another member of the family. The following requirements are essential:

- Students will only share rooms with members of the same sex
- Students will have their own bed
- Access to bathroom facilities will not be via an adult's bedroom
- Access to a bedroom or other room used by adults or people of the opposite sex should not be via the student's bedroom.
- Privacy for dressing and undressing should be provided
- Students must know the emergency exit route and plan for emergencies such as fire

Ideally, there should not be a significant age difference between the exchange student and the host family member sharing the bedroom. As a guest, the exchange student should be sensitive to the privacy of the property of your host by being tidy and courteous when living in the house.

## Financial matters

### School costs

Exchange students will not be required to pay fees to their partner school but families will continue to pay KWS fees while they are away.

Parents are responsible for all costs associated with their child's travel to and from exchange.

Exchange students will wear either the KWS uniform, the partner school uniform or casuals, depending on what country you are visiting. Please see the School specific booklet for more details about uniform requirements.

### Pocket Money

Parents should ensure students have adequate pocket money for their time away. Students are usually able to access funds from home via the local ATMs. Students should not carry large sums of money. Students should have sufficient pocket money to cover things like entrance fees, travel, small gifts to take home and for the host family, telephone SIM cards and bills and any other personal expenses which the host family should not be expected to cover.

See your school specific handbook for information on tipping while visiting your exchange country. While tipping is not part of our Australian culture, it can be offensive not to tip if it is customary in the country you visit.

## Medical

The exchange student's parents are responsible for arranging full medical and dental insurance before the student leaves Australia. KWS insurance covers most of this cost and parents should consider the level of insurance and purchase extra should they feel the need to be covered to a level above the KWS policy. Travel insurance is highly recommended.

Exchange students will need to fill in the partner School's medical forms along with other documentation.

If a student is taking any prescription medication, a letter is required from their doctor giving the name and reason and duration of the medication. The student should also take adequate supplies of the medication. In such a case, a copy of the supporting letter may be requested by customs officials when the student arrives in the host country. Medication should be kept in its original packaging.

Check vaccinations required to visit your destination (and any other country you may visit afterwards as part of an extended holiday).

## Official Documentation - Visas

It is the responsibility of the parents to seek information regarding their child's travel and to arrange a visa. It is also the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their child abides by the conditions of the visa.

Further information about Visas can be found at:

<https://dfat.gov.au/travel/visas/Pages/visas-for-australians-travelling-overseas.aspx>

## Monitoring your child's exchange - communication with home

As a parent you will be in the best position to monitor, through regular contact with your child, how the exchange program is progressing. If you have any concerns about the exchange program, including concerns about supervision, safety, discrimination, harassment or bullying, you should contact the exchange co-ordinator.

## What to take overseas

Please read your partner school booklet for specific details about clothing requirements, activities, local weather including seasonal temperatures, and make informed decisions about what to pack to go overseas.

**The following items are suggested as a guide:**

- Four or five school shirts or blouses (if you are wearing a uniform)
- 1 - 2 pairs of grey school pants (for boys wearing uniforms)
- 3 T shirts and 2 pairs of jeans or pants
- Shorts
- Warm shirts or jumpers, tops or a track suit
- 7 pairs of underwear
- 7 pairs of socks
- School shoes (black if you are wearing uniform) and boots or another casual pair of shoes
- Sunhat
- Jacket, preferably waterproof and warm
- Joggers
- Swimming costume, (optional-goggles and cap, flip flops/sandles)
- Beach towel
- Pyjamas
- Good Casual clothing – something appropriate to wear out to dinner/theatre
- Casual clothing
- Toiletries, medicines and personal items
- Sporting equipment and sports clothes (football boots, etc)
- A4 Exercise book to record notes from lessons and pencil case with writing materials
- Family photos, a diary to write/record experiences in etc.

### Optional:

A phone (check with your provider about a sim card in the other country or purchase on arrival), iPad, laptop.

## Labelling your belongings

Everything that goes to the school should be clearly labelled. It is preferable that labels are sewn onto clothing items.

## STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

An exchange is not to be seen simply as a holiday for the students involved.

### Directions from those in authority

As this may be the first time the student has travelled overseas without parents, there are important obligations for which parents and students should be aware.

In particular, the school and living arrangements experienced by the student on exchange will be different from those to which they are accustomed and may involve risks which are not experienced in the home country. It is therefore very important that the student follows directions from boarding staff, teachers, host parents and other people in authority during the exchange. (This does not affect the conditions outlined under 'Safety Issues').

### Behaviour and values

An exchange student violating any law overseas may be returned to their home country.

### Drugs and alcohol:

The use of non-prescription drugs or associating with anyone involved with drugs is strictly forbidden.

KWS students are not allowed to purchase or drink alcoholic beverages or smoke cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes, regardless of local law or custom while on exchange.

### Culture, manners and etiquette

The student must be sensitive to the cultural and home environment in which he/she is living. For example, in some cultures, shoes are removed before entering the house.

### Meals

Please discuss mealtime etiquette expectations with the host family and/or boarding staff.

### Bathroom and bathing

Some cultures have different methods of bathing, for example, sitting on a stool and showering or scooping water and throwing it over themselves. They may not use showers or baths. To avoid embarrassment, please discuss bathroom expectations with the host family.

In Australian homes, toilets are sat upon. In our culture, we place used toilet paper in the toilet and flush it, rather than placing it in a separate bin. This may not be the case overseas. Female house members are expected to wrap sanitary napkins and tampons in a paper bag and place them in a bin. Please discuss what can and can't go down the sinks and toilets with your host family.



## Daily Routine / School Life

Exchange students must acknowledge that they have responsibilities to their hosts. These include:

- Common courtesy and impeccable manners
- A willing and positive contribution to the life of the school
- Strong respect, demonstrated by actions, for the school's values and traditions.

The exchange student must attend all classes, complete all school assignments and maintain good grades. Exchange students are expected to apply themselves with same degree of diligence and effort as they would at KWS.

The exchange student will abide by the rules of the host school, particularly regarding attendance, general behaviour and dress standards.

## Safety Issues

### Dangerous activities

- The student is not permitted to participate in sky diving, hang gliding, parachute jumping, driving motorised vehicles such as motorbikes and quad bikes, shooting, bungee jumping, or any other dangerous activity. (participation in banned activities will also void most insurance claims). Students should seek parental permission for the following risky activities: skiing, horse riding, water skiing, swimming in dams, hot air ballooning, surfing, rock climbing, abseiling and flying.
- Students on exchange may be asked to undertake farming activities on rural properties. Host parents would be expected to exercise a duty of care for such activities that have inherent risk. Communication between families about dangerous activities can alleviate concerns both ways.
- The student must take care for their own safety at all times and immediately notify the International Student Exchange Co-ordinator as soon as possible of any concerns in relation to safety and wellbeing.
- If a student is concerned about a particular activity, the student should refuse to undertake that activity and report to the International Student Exchange Co-ordinator.

### Discrimination, Harassment or Bullying

The exchange student should immediately report any concern about discrimination, harassment or bullying to their Head Tutor the International Student Exchange Co-ordinator or the Director of Boarding.

It is vital that the student advises the exchange program coordinator and parents as soon as possible of their concerns if:

- They feel uncomfortable in the course of the program.
- They feel unsafe.
- They are being harassed or bullied, or are uncomfortable about the way a particular person is treating them.

## Emergencies

See your specific handbook for emergency numbers for your host country.

The number overseas will not be 000 as it is in Australia.

## Legal Obligations

In an exchange program students are expected to fulfil the following requirements. Exchange students have a binding responsibility to:

- Fulfil the requirements of their visa;
- Attend the appointed school full time;
- Behave in a fit and proper manner as agreed under the terms of the relevant exchange program;
- Leave the host country on completion of the exchange program;
- Leave the host country earlier if circumstances develop such that the exchange organisers believe the student's further participation in the program is not appropriate.
- Observe quarantine laws. Please make friends and family aware of laws if they intend to send you mail or parcels from home. There are a lot of animal and food based items that you cannot bring back to Australia.

## MAXIMISING THE EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE

### Preparation

Preparation is the key to a student having a memorable experience on exchange. The best preparation is for a student to educate themselves about the local conditions. Talking to those who have been here, reading books, travel guides and researching using the Internet are good sources to investigate what it would be like to live overseas.

It can help to be aware of any preconceived ideas a student may have about your host country. Students could write down a few ideas and discuss where these have come from. It will be much easier to adapt to a new culture if you can understand the source of these preconceived ideas, and have an open mind for new adventures.

We would recommend that you spend some time looking at the school website as well as researching about the area of the country you are travelling to.

### Culture Shock

As a natural part of an exchange experience, students will, to some degree, undergo 'culture shock'.

Students will find that the people, attitudes, values, food, and way of life in the new environment can be very different from those in Australia. Some of these differences may cause concern and even anxiety. This process of adjustment is referred to as 'culture shock'. It is important to remember that culture shock is a natural part of the re-adjustment process or cycle, which everyone goes through when moving from a familiar environment to a new one. The key to overcoming culture shock is to be prepared.

Those students who are travelling to a country where English is not the language spoken will face unique difficulties. Students are bound to feel isolated and lonely because of the language barrier. It is hard to concentrate and understand every conversation, and even harder to communicate feelings and needs in a second language. Students must be prepared for the frustrations that language barriers will cause. When language does improve, it makes the achievement all the more rewarding.

It is important to know that there is a cyclical four-phase process that can be identified in the process of adjustment.

- **Honeymoon** – The student abroad is fascinated by the new situation and eager to explore, and generally focuses on similarities between the old and new environment.
- **Irritation and Hostility** – Characterised by a hostile and aggressive attitude towards the host culture and homesickness. The student longs for something familiar. Thoughts such as "I think I made a mistake to go on exchange" and "I really miss home" are signs of the "hostility" stage of cultural adjustment.
- **Gradual Adjustment** – Things begin to make sense, the student becomes oriented to the new environment and is able to pick up on cultural cues and clues (language may begin to improve). The sense of isolation fades and self-confidence is restored.
- **Adaptation** – The student embraces the customs of the new culture and feels at home. Anxiety disappears and the student accepts and begins to enjoy many of the experiences, habits and customs of the host country.

When exchange students return to their home environments, there can be a similar re-entry process, progressing through the same curve. They can be excited to be home, feel some hostility when they find it is not as they remember it, see humour in the differences between two cultures, and again feel at home in their original culture.

## **Coping Skills**

The most effective way to limit the adverse experience associated with culture shock is by being involved in the new life abroad. Students should explore, try new things, meet the host families, other local people and get to know them well. It is interesting for a student to use the differences between cultures to advantage by sharing thoughts and feelings with new friends. It is important to participate in activities in and around your new communities.

Generally, host families and members of the host school will be friendly and value the opportunity to get to know exchange students. However, it is important to remember that people will not always go out of their way for someone just because they are from abroad.



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— SCHOOL —

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